

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12 AID-20 PC-15

COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 RSR-01 /136 W

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R 241554 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4073

INFO CINCSO

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

DIA

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UY

SUBJ: MILITAR WARNS CONGRESS

CINCSO FOR POLAD

1. SUMMARY: IN STRONGLY WORDED STATEMENT BROADCAST LAST NIGHT OVER NATIONAL RADIO AND TELEVISION NETWORK, MILITARY COMMANDERS - IN- CHIEF DENOUNCED " COORDINATED" EFFORT TO ATTACK MILITARY AND OBSTRUCT RENOVATION OF THE NATION. WARNING WAS ADDRESSED MOST CLEARLY TO LEGISLATURE, BUT NATIONAL LABOR CONFEDERATION (CNT) ALSO GENTLY CHASTIZED FOR CALLING STRIKE FOR MARCH 29. END SUMMARY.

2. MILITARY SPOKESMAN, FLANKED BY THREE COMMANDERS- IN- CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES AND OTHER HIGH RANKING MILITAR OFFICERS, ADDRESSED NATION EVENING MARCH 23. DECLARATION NOTED THAT MILITARY WAS BREAKING ITS USUAL SILENCE IN ORDER TO COUNTER THE DEMAGOGUERY AND SCANDAL FOMENTED BY " PRIVILEGED SECTORS" WHO WANT TO RETAIN " PERSONAL POWER AND BENEFITS". MAJOR POINTS IN DECLARATION INCLUDE:

A) . MILITARY HAD ONLY INTEVENED IN THE POLITICAL PROCESSES THIS FEBRUARY AFTER THE NATION HAD REACHED " POINT OF COLLAPSE." THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MILITARY'S POLITICAL ROLE HAD RECEIVED THE "TACIT SUPPORT OF THE PUBLIC" AND THE "EXPRESSED SUPPORT" OF THE EXECUTIVE. THE CONGRESS, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS "ABSENT AND SILENT FROM THIS SUPPORT, A FACT EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT CONSIDERING THE CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS, WHO POSTURE THEMSELVES AS PROTECTORS OF THE NATION'S INSTITUTIONS, CLAMOR AND PROMOTE WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS FOR THE RESIGNATION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC."

B). CONDEMNED EFFORTS BY "CERTAIN POLITICAL SECTORS" TO DELAY AND OBSTRUCT MILITARY PROGRAMS OUTLINED IN COMMUNIQUE #4 AND #7 OF FEBRUARY. OBSTRUCTIONISM WAS SEEN IN EFFORTS TO INCITE NEW VIOLENT CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN STUDENTS/WORKERS AND THE ARMED FORCES, TO REPLACE "HARDLINE" OFFICERS ("DUROS") WITH MORE "MANAGEABLE" AND "LEGALISTIC" COMMANDERS, TO ATTACK THE PRESTIGE OF THE ARMED FORCES, AND TO FRUSTRATE REQUESTS BY THE MILITARY JUSTICE FOR THE LIFTING OF THE CONGRESSIONAL IMMUNITIES OF CONGRESSMEN. EFFORT TO PROVOKE CONFRONTATION BETWEEN "FRENTE AMPLIO" AND MILITARY ALSO CRITICIZED.

C). IN MOST DETAILED SECTION OF DECLARATION, POLITICIANS WERE ACCUSED OF FINANCIAL IRREGULARITIES IN THE MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTAL COUNCILS, FAILING TO REPAY SUBSTANTIAL LOANS RECEIVED TO FINANCE THE 1971 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, AND RECEIVING OVERLY GENEROUS RETIREMENT BENEFITS AND HOUSING LOANS. (DECLARATION MENTIONED NO NAMES. BUT DOCUMENTS LISTING THE PUBLIC FUNDS RECEIVED BY ALMOST EVERY PROMINENT POLITICIAN, "FRENTE AMPLIO" AS WELL AS COLORADO AND BLANCO, WERE MADE AVAILABLE TO REPORTERS.) POLITICIANS WERE ALSO CONDEMNED FOR HAVING "UNDERMINED PUBLIC MORALS," AND FOR CREATING CONDITIONS FAVORABLE TO THE "PENETRATION OF FOREIGN IDEOLOGIES." ACCUSATION ALSO MADE THAT MANY POLITICIANS HAD ENTERED INTO SECRET NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SUBVERSIVE MOVEMENT.

D). "AN IMPORTANT CENTER OF THE WORKING FORCES" WAS CHASTIZED FOR PROPOSING NATIONWIDE STRIKE IN SUPPORT OF THE ARMED FORCES' EFFORTS. RATHER, THE COMMANDERS-IN-CHIEF RECOMMENDED, IT WOULD BE MORE APPROPRIATE FOR THE LABOR MOVEMENT TO CALL FOR MORE, NOT LESS, WORK.

E). ARMED FORCES REAFFIRMED THEIR LOYALTY TO THE CONSTITUTION AND TO THE NATION'S INSTITUTIONS. BUT IN RINGING FINAL STATEMENT, THEY CONCLUDED THAT THE MILITARY WOULD "NEVER CEASE IN THE FULLFILLMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF ITS PROMISES AND WILL NOT WAIVER IN GONG TO THE FINAL
CONSEQUENCES IN ORDER TO REMOE THE OBSTACLES THAT ARE PLACED IN
THE ROAD OF THE
PUBLIC HAPPINESS." " DIGNIFIED INSTITUTIONS WILL NOT BE THWARTED."

3. ATMOSPHERE IN MONTEVIDEO PRIOR TO DECLARATION WAS TENSE. TROOPS
WERE CONFINED TO BARRACKS EARLIER IN THE DAY AND REMORS CIRCULATED
THROUGHOUT THE CITY YESTERDAY EVENING OF POSSIBLE ARRESTS OF
MILITARY CRITICS, ESPECAILLY SENATOR AMILCAR VASCONCELLOS.
POLITICAL REACTYJN TODAY NOTABLY CIRCUMSPECT. SPOKESMAN FOR
PRESIDENT BORDABERRY TOLD PRESS THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD BEEN
CONSULTED BY THE MILITARY COMMANDERS PRIOR TO THE SPEECH AND
THAT HE FULLY CONCURRED IN ITS CONTENT. MEMBRs OF CONGRESS HAVE
BEEN ALMOST UNANIMOUS IN AVOIDING PUBLIC COMMENT.

4. DAY BEFORE, MARCH 22, SENATORIAL SUPPORTERS OF PRESIDENT
BORDABERRY FRUSTRATED (THROUGH LACK OF SENATE QUORUM) ATTEMPT
BY VASCONCELLOS TO INTERPELLATE MINISTE OF DEFENSE ON ALLEDGED
MILITARY WRONG- DOINGS. VASCONCELLOS REACTED BY NOTING HE WOULD
NEVERTHELESS CARRY THROUGH WITH INVESTIGATION OF MILITARY WHEN
CONGRESS RECONVENES THIS COMING WEEK TO CONSIER THE EXECUTIVE' S
REQUEST TO EXTEND THE SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN CONSTITUTIONAL
GUARANTEES (MVD 890).

5. COMMENT: MILITARY DECLARATION IS CLEAR EVIDENCE OF ALL TOO
OBVIOUS SENSITIVITY O MILITARY TO ANY CRITICISM. WE EXPECT
CONGRESSIONAL POLITICIANS TO AGONIZINGLY REASSESS IN NEXT FEW
DAYS DEGREE OF INDEPENDENCE AND OPPOSITION THEY ARE PREPARED TO
MAINTAIN IN VIEW OF WHAT CAN ONLY BE CHARACTERIZED
AS A CLEAR THREAT BY THE MILITARY THAT IT WILL NOT
ALLOW ATTACKS ON ITS HONOR OR ITS PROGRAMS.
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*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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